

ENTRE 440/540 – Business Plan Practicum

Winter Quarter 2019 *Syllabus*

Instructor: John Zagula
Email: johnza@uw.edu

Class time: Thursdays 6:00-7:50
Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

Learn how to start a business and make it successful and how to use the Business Plan Competition (BPC) and other upcoming competitions to your advantage.. Examine and apply useful, real-world concepts and tools - from generating the original idea/inspiration to business formation/planning to persuading funders/partners/customers - all while meeting and working with interesting classmates and some of Seattle's most accomplished entrepreneurs and subject-matter experts along the way.

Course objectives

1. Get inspired to start or to participate in something new
- or learn that it's not for you.
2. Learn what it takes (and what to avoid) to have a successful new company
- and how to use a set of general purpose business planning tools to get there.
3. Learn how to persuade the others you need to support your business
- and how to give a great pitch no matter the topic.

And learn how the Business Plan Competition (BPC) and other competitions work, including entry requirements, stages of competition, judging criteria, and prizes for winners.

Required reading: provided by instructor.

Grading:

No textbooks, no tests, no grades (pass/fail only), limited assignments but tons of class participation, teamwork and practical application of tools. Passing performance is based on:

Participation (20%): attendance is critical, everyone must sign in (8 of 10 minimum);

Quizzes (20%): there will also be many simple, "no wrong answer" surveys, 80% of these is also required;

Business Planning Template (30%): Even the best idea needs a plan to turn it into a business. This template is a simple tool outlining the elements of a sound business plan (also reflecting the criteria for judging the BPC). Students may choose to work in teams of 3-4 students. Every team/student must provide/justify answers in a final document of no fewer than 4 and no more than 15 pages.

Company Pitch (30%): The moment of truth comes in pitching your company. There are several opportunities for students to practice telling the persuasive story of their business. Every team/student must provide a finished Powerpoint/Slides version of this by end of the class.

Deliverable Dates

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Weekly: responses to simple survey/quizzes are due within 4 days of the previous class.

January 2: The Business Planning Template will be available on Canvas - go ahead and read it in advance.

January 5: the first simple survey is due, you will find it on Canvas. It is important so do fill it out.

January 10: First day of class - SHOW UP ON TIME

January 31: Pick an idea and pick a team, start to explain it

optional...

... team rosters due - teams are optional but HIGHLY ENCOURAGED, class time and other resources will be available to facilitate the team formation process, teams should be ~3-5 people).

... responses due to the first elements of the Business Planning Template

... first draft of PowerPoint Pitch due

February 14: optional, submit responses to second elements of the Business Planning Template

February 28: optional, but highly recommended, submit second draft Powerpoint pitch.

March 7: PITCH CONTEST (*with expert judges and prizes*); mandatory final Business Plan outlines and Powerpoint presentations due

March 14: last class and last opportunity to give trial elevator pitches in front of the class.

Other: there should be a minimum of two dates/times set for informal, totally optional pitching workshops outside of class.